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Forage News

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6-2015

## Forage News [2015-06]

Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, University of Kentucky

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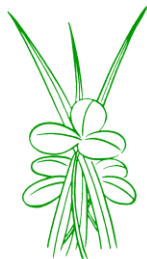
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### Repository Citation

Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, University of Kentucky, "Forage News [2015-06]" (2015). *Forage News*. 33.

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# FORAGE NEWS

For more forage information, visit our UK Forage Extension Website at: <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Forage/>

**June 2015**

*S. Ray Smith, Extension Forage Specialist – Arleen Smith, Secretary*

## National Forage Week

The American Forage and Grassland Council (AFGC) is introducing National Forage Week for the first time June 21 – 27, 2015. The goal of this week is to promote the value of forages in the U.S. and the recognition that forages are one of the largest agriculture industries in this country. Forages provide the feed for the majority of the meat and milk production in this country. In AFGC's initial Forage Week campaign, this important crop will be highlighted with promotional fliers, emails, press releases and through social media. The campaign will grow each year with video elements, additional farming publication coverage and congressional designation.

The promotional fliers will include information on the importance of forages to the U.S. farming sector and entire economy. The 2012 USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) survey reported that there are **55,775,162 acres of hay, silage and greenchop acreage in the U.S.** These forages were produced on 813,583 farms. In 2007, USDA Economic Research Service reported **777 million acres in grassland, pasture and rangeland**, not including cropland used for grazing. The USDA 2012 survey also reported alfalfa hay was grown on 16,625,832 acres on 255,360 farms. Corn for silage was grown on 86,365 farms on 7,196,628 acres.

AFGC is asking for your support to get the word out by putting up fliers in local farm supply stores, send press releases to hometown papers, arrange for a public service announcements and posting on Facebook or other social media posts. To download promotional fliers and learn about other ways you can participate in National Forage Week go to [www.afgc.org](http://www.afgc.org).

## Stewardship with Herbicides

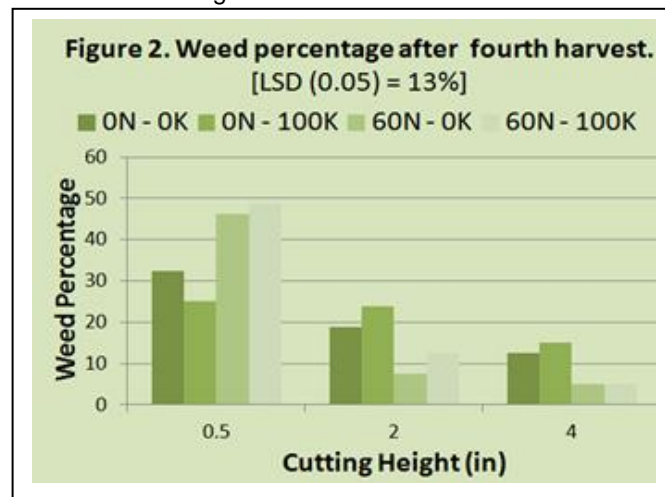
We are fortunate to have many herbicide options available to manage weeds in grass hay fields and pastures, but there are several precautions to insure that the herbicide you spray stays on your farm. Dr. J.D. Green recently gave a presentation at our "Pastures Please" workshop on the importance of stewardship with herbicides and then developed a new extension publication entitled "Practicing Good Stewardship when Applying Herbicides for Pasture Weed Control," AGR-219. This publication is divided into 5 sections or tips which include: Tip 1- Select the Appropriate Herbicide Product; Tip 2: Applying the Right Time of the Year; Tip 3: Spray Attention; Tip 4: Minimize the Potential for Offsite Movement; and Tip 5: Reseeding Fields and Future Crop Uses.

To view or download "Practicing Good Stewardship when Applying Herbicides for Pasture Weed Control" go to the UK Forage Website and click on Publications and then on Weeds.

## Set Disc Mowers High to Prolong Grass Hay Stands

Dr. Garry Lacefield and others conducted a survey of forage specialists across the U.S. a few years ago on the reasons orchardgrass hay fields seem to be thinning out in recent years. Survey respondents identified lower fertility, severe weather conditions, insects, and diseases as factors contributing to stand loss, but they felt that the number one reason for shorter stand life was low cutting heights. And low cutting heights were mainly attributable to disc mowers. Disc mowers are great hay cutting tools, with their ease of operation, speed of harvest, and ability to easily harvest thick stands. These mowers allow producers to easily harvest at 1 to 2 inches. Low cutting heights like this are fine for alfalfa since it regrows from energy stored below ground in its large taproot, but can be disastrous for grasses like orchardgrass. Orchardgrass has a more upright growth habit and low cutting removes all the leaves needed for photosynthesis and the base of tillers (stems) where carbohydrates are stored for regrowth.

An Asbury University student, Leah Saylor, conducted a research experiment on orchardgrass cutting height at UK 4 years ago. Leah found that just one season with low cutting heights significantly reduced stand longevity and increased weed infestation, regardless of the addition of fertilizer treatments. The results of Leah's experiment are shown below in Figures 2 and 4.



- **Field tour - Variety tests and Agronomic Demonstrations** – Gene Olson, Univ. of Kentucky

### Updated Compendium of Alfalfa Diseases and Pests now Available

The Compendium of Alfalfa Diseases and Pests, Third Edition, is now available from APS Press. This 138-page book includes comprehensive diagnostic and management information on nearly 50 infectious diseases, non-infectious diseases, insect pests, and abiotic conditions (like herbicide injury). It delivers an almost entirely new collection of nearly 250 color images, revised management information, the addition of five recently discovered diseases, and a new section covering major arthropod pests. Extension scientists, consultants, field staff, and growers will find the book helpful for identifying and managing alfalfa diseases, pests, and disorders. The publication was sponsored by NAFA, The Samuel Roberts Nobel Foundation, S&W Seed Company, Legacy Seeds, Alforex, DuPont Pioneer, and Forage Genetics International. The book can be ordered online or by telephone at 1.800.328.7560. To order simply google the title and order through APS Press or Amazon. If buying used, make sure it's the third edition.

### UK Ag Weather

If you have never gone to the UK Ag Weather page try it sometime. There are many weather sites, but few show detailed predictions relevant to Forage and Livestock producers. The Ag Weather page for your area not only gives a 3 hour forecast on temperature, rainfall, etc., but predicts hay drying conditions, chances for spray drift, and the potential for livestock heat stress. As most producers know, hay drying and livestock heat stress are not simply based on temperature, but on relative humidity and wind speed in addition to temperature. To view, go to the UK Forage Website and click on Local Weather and then enter your zip code to view the forecast for your area.

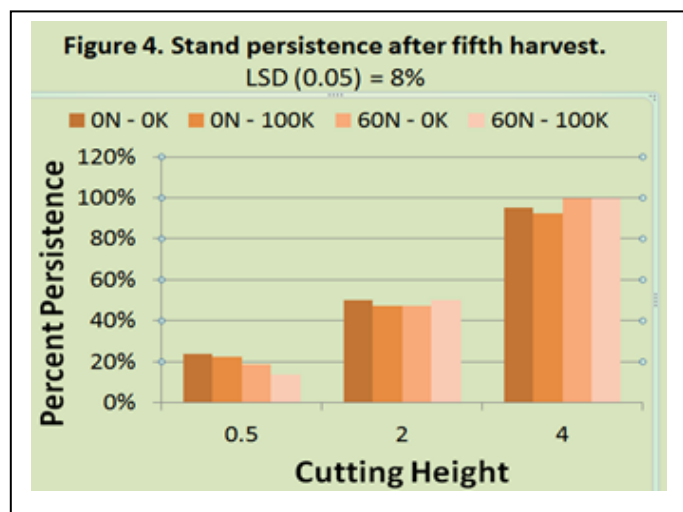
DAY	WEDNESDAY				
EDT 3HR	10A	1P	4P	7P	10P
MAX/MIN	--	--	--	84°	--
TEMP.	72°	80°	84°	80°	73°
Rain/Showers	--	Isolated	Isolated	Scattered	Scattered
Spray Cond.	FAIR	FAIR	FAIR	FAIR	GOOD
Dry Cond.	GOOD	FAIR	FAIR	FAIR	FAIR
Leaf Wetness	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Livestock Heatstress	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
	70.69	75.34	77.35	75.34	71.13

### Upcoming Events (details at Forage Website)

JUNE 2 Equine Farm and Facilities Expo. Lexington, KY  
 JUNE 16 Western KY Equine Field Day Murray, KY  
 JUNE 21-27 National Forage Week.  
 AUGUST 17 Advanced Grazing School Lexington, KY  
 SEPT 9-10 Heart of America Grazing Conference. Wilmington OH.  
 SEPT 17 KFGC Field Day in Christian County.  
 NOV 20-24 International Grassland Congress. New Delhi, India.  
 DEC 13-16 National Grazing Lands Coalition Conference (GLCI). Grapevine, TX.

### 2015

JAN 10-12 American Forage and Grassland Council Annual Meeting. Baton Rouge, LA.



These results show that the recommended cutting height of 3 to 4 inches for orchardgrass and similar grasses is essential to maintain thick, weed free stands. Most disc mower manufacturers sell skid shoes to insure higher cutting heights. These are well worth the price.

### Warm Season Grass Professional Workshop

The American Forage and Grassland Council is pleased to host the Warm Season Grass Professional Workshop August 18, 2015 in Lexington, KY (see agenda below). This workshop is modeled after the successful Cool Season Grass Workshop that has been held around the U.S. for the last 7 years. The goal is to provide advanced training to seed industry personnel, consultants, county agents and others on production issues and new developments for warm season grasses grown in the United States. This first workshop will focus primarily on warm season annual grasses and include topics on genetics, seed quality, establishment, management, beef and dairy production, testing for anti-quality components, and variety selection. The overall goal of the workshop will be to bring participants to the next level of training on these and other relevant topics. Full details on workshop registration will be available in early June at the AFGC website ([www.afgc.org](http://www.afgc.org)). Cost for the workshop is \$175.00.

- **Genetics of the BMR Trait within the Sorghum genus** – Ray Smith, Univ. of Kentucky
- **Seed Quality and Seed Industry priorities** – Chad Hale, Byron Seeds
- **Determining the best variety for Warm Season Annuals** – Chris Teutsch, Virginia Tech
- **Beef Cattle performance with warm season annuals** – Jeff Lehmkuhler, Univ. of Kentucky
- **Dairy Cattle performance with warm season annuals** – Chad Hale, Byron Seeds
- **Agronomic practices to maximize yield, quality and regrowth** – Dennis Hancock, Univ. of Georgia
- **Simple on-farm tests for nitrate and cyanide toxicity** – Ray Smith, Univ. of Kentucky
- **Minor use summer annual grasses: Teff, Crabgrass, German millet, etc.** – Panel
- **How I've integrated Corn grazing into my forage system** – Kentucky Beef producer
- **Bermudagrass production and emerging issues** – Dennis Hancock, Univ. of Georgia
- **Role of warm season native grasses on beef cattle farms?** – Tom Keene, Univ. of Kentucky